

THE COMMENTATOR

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Students Host First-Ever AP Course Fair



PHOTO: ANNABELLE GLASSMAN



PHOTO: ANNABELLE GLASSMAN

Student-organizers welcoming students to the course fair.

Students presenting info on AP statistics and AP US Government

Abby Crowe
Staff Writer

The rising anticipation for the first-ever Advanced Placement (AP) Course Fair was demonstrated by students' raised voices and visible excitement. Hosted on Jan. 14 by the Equity Ambassadors in Freeman's big gym, prospective students had the opportunity to explore different APs. Event coordinators set up tri-folds on tables around the room displaying information about each AP course that Freeman offers.

When students walked in, they were greeted by the Equity Ambassador volunteers and a flier for the fair including the benefits and "facts and fictions" about AP classes. Some stations handed out separate sheets with specific units, materials, time commitments, and other relevant information pertaining to specific classes. Representatives for the classes were chosen by teachers for their hard work and dedication.

The Equity Ambassadors host events throughout the year such as Culture Day and the AP Course Fair. "The purpose of the club is basically to find equity gaps at our school and try to create innovative ways to close those gaps," said Carter Reilly, club sponsor and Testing Coordinator at Freeman. "It's also a club that works to promote inclusivity and the sense of belonging in all students."

"It just feels nice to be in a welcoming community and an environment where all the teachers are so nice," said sophomore Karen Israel. "This event is [helpful] for getting different students' perspectives and hearing that APs aren't as bad as you think."

Aarna Sitani, a junior in Equity Ambassadors, said this event proved "successful" by the chatter of underclassmen as presenters explained the details of each AP class.

Freshman Lainey Peterson said "It's beneficial to everybody because a lot of people have different interests and it shows how you can really gravitate towards anything

that you like." Lainey "want[s] to be a therapist, and think[s] that AP Psychology would be really beneficial for [her] to take." She took the opportunity that the course fair offered to reflect on her goals and connect them to the course booths she visited. The Equity Ambassadors had

"[I]t shows how you can gravitate towards anything that you like."

- Lainey Peterson

a few goals for the AP course fair. First, Mrs. Reilly said, "The main goal ... is to encourage students to discover the benefits of taking an AP course in high school." Some students are reluctant to challenge themselves with harder classes because they feel comfortable in the kind of environment they are currently in.

Another goal of the event was "to match the demographics in our

AP courses with the demographics of our school," said Mrs. Reilly. Aligning with Equity Ambassadors' goals as a club, they hoped to bring in students of all backgrounds to see all of the options available to everyone. Mrs. Reilly said, "I believe a high school experience that closely matches what it would look like in the world/workforce is beneficial for all involved."

"Our AP classes currently are socio-economically richer, and they are less diverse," said senior Sagar Murthy, Equity Ambassadors executive member. "There are tons of smart people who don't take those classes, and we want to include them."

There are many preconceived notions of these courses which hold some back from signing up for an AP class. Sagar said, "Some people are disincentivized to join the classes because they don't see their friends in them." The Equity Ambassadors hope that by creating welcoming and helpful events like the course fair, the gaps within classes will gradually diminish.

Before attending the fair, Lainey Peterson had reservations about taking AP classes. "There's kind of a stigma behind it and how hard it is," said Lainey. "It's just kind of scary." Once she had vis-

"There are tons of smart people who don't take those classes, and we want to include them."

- Sagar Murthy

ited the stations and spoken to students, she said her perspective shifted to a more positive one.

When asked what advice he would give to students deciding to take an AP for the first time, Sagar said, "If you feel too comfortable in class right now, AP is for you—if you're too comfortable, that means you're not growing as a person and school is all about growth."

Goodbye Mr. Sanders, Hello Mrs. O'Neal

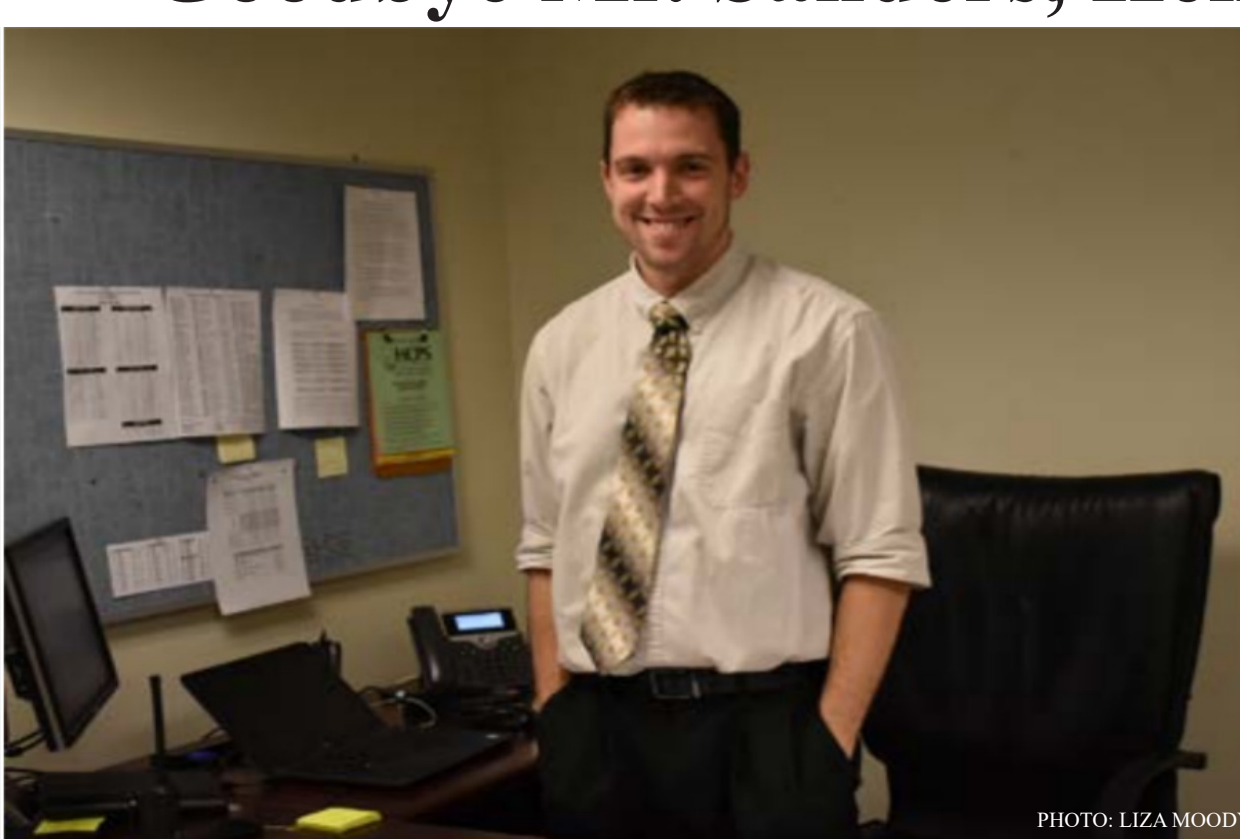


PHOTO: LIZA MOODY

Mr. Sanders' welcome picture to Freeman



PHOTO: CARA JEAN O'NEAL

New Vice-Principal, Cara O'Neal

Peter Kriebel
Staff Writer

The halls of Freeman have been without a familiar face lately. By now it's no secret that Mr. Sanders has chosen to advance his career and undertake the position of principal at Bell Creek Middle School in Hanover County.

While the Freeman Family is all very proud of and happy for its former vice-principal, this change brings bittersweet emotions as well. Many wondered who would be the successor to such a Freeman icon. Well, their wait is over: Freeman's new vice principal is Cara

Jean O'Neal. Mrs. O'Neal has plenty of experience. She has worked in education for 20 years and has had her license to be an administrator since 2007. She doesn't just have a background in schools. "I actually worked for the Department of Corrections," said Mrs. O'Neal. "So I went in and out of all of the state prisons in Virginia, and worked with incarcerated young men and women who were trying to pass their GED. And so that can sometimes be intimidating. But I loved that job." She believes in second chances. She said, "People can do a really bad thing but then they can change and want to do better for themselves."

With all that experience, there's a reason she's decided to come

work at Freeman. "I've worked with all ages - from preschoolers to adults - but high school students are my absolute favorites to work with," said Mrs. O'Neal.

She feels she can address some of the problems that face students' mental health at Freeman. "I have a lot of experience in helping students that deal with anxiety, depression, grief, or paying attention, and how we can help those students," said Mrs. O'Neal. She realizes this is particularly important as students continue to face the effects of the pandemic. "I know with kids coming back after COVID there's been a lot more concern about how kids are doing, like their well-being and their mental health," she said.

For Mrs. O'Neal, becoming the stereotypical vice-principal isn't the goal. "I don't want to just be ... seen as the lady that handles the referrals," she said. "I want students to feel comfortable coming to me and telling me what their experience is like here."

As Mrs. O'Neal gets started, she might be encouraged to know

"I don't want to just be seen as the lady that handles the referrals."

- Cara Jean O'Neal

how Mr. Sanders looks back at his time at Freeman. "Freeman

taught me most about all the different and valuable perspectives of the world," Mr. Sanders said. "Freeman is unique in that it supports students from nations

"Freeman taught me most about all the different and valuable perspectives of the world."

- Tim Sanders

across the globe. These students opened my eyes to what's possible and taught me so much. I am forever grateful to all of the students at Freeman for this."

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Omicron Disrupts Day-to-Day Freeman

Adair Reid
Staff Writer

Cases of COVID-19 variant Omicron have swept the nation, presenting obstacles for schools around the country. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the variant was first confirmed in the U.S. on December 1, 2022, and has proved to be highly transmissible, affecting countless Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) students and families.

The recent winter break has caused an increase in cases and exposures, making Freeman's policies more important than ever as the second semester begins. "As of recently, we have had significant community spread and we know it's around," said Principal John Marshall. "We've had very minimal documented spread of COVID in the building."

Despite this, COVID-19 has still made rounds through students and staff. Freeman teacher Ms. Hunnicutt shared her recent experience with COVID. "I got it right after Christmas break started," she said. "I'm assuming it was Omicron. To be honest, I think it was through school."

The recent surge has reminded many students of earlier periods during the pandemic and put communities all over the country on high alert. "It almost feels like those first months of 2020 again," said freshman Sofie McCormick. "Like a lockdown but with the

exception of school and sports." Protocols such as wearing masks, scanning QR codes stationed in the cafeteria, and social distancing are HCPS staples for preventing the spread of COVID-19 and reducing the amount of student and staff absences. "We're seeing increased absences, most of them out of precaution. That happens with staff members every day..." said Mr. Marshall. "We've had more staff out than we'd like and we have more students out than we'd like... [but] we have a staff that's been willing to just step in and help each other out and we're really fortunate for that."

Decreases in staff numbers, often absent out of precaution, impacts teachers' workloads and leave many stretched thin. "We're all prepared to cover during our planning periods because so many people are getting it that we just don't have enough substitutes," Ms. Hunnicutt said. "An extended period of that kind of procedure is going to take a toll on the teacher's ability to grade and plan."

While Henrico County cannot decide to switch to virtual learning because of a new Virginia state law (Senate Bill 1303), which "requires each school board to offer in-person learning... for at least the minimum number of required instructional hours," until its expiration date in August 2022, staff shortages have jeopardized many individual schools' ability to remain open. "It's legitimately possible that a school could have to go

[virtual] for a week or longer because of staffing issues," Mr. Marshall said. "We're working really hard to keep that from happening."

Nationwide, many students feel exhausted by the pandemic's cycle of surges and ebbs, but remaining vigilant is still necessary to maintain in-person learning. "The cycle will not stop if there aren't set rules in place," said Sofie. "Make rules people [must] abide by because I don't want to be sent home because people didn't follow the rules."

The effectiveness of the policies Freeman has in place mostly depends on compliance and honesty from students. "I think the teachers and [administrators] have done a great job reminding students to pull their masks up and have taken the right safety precautions," said Sofie. "But the spread is still happening and won't ever end if people aren't truthful about where they've been and if they've been exposed."

Wearing masks might feel like an old routine for students, but keeping others safe is a high priority during the winter when many people are more likely to be susceptible to illness. "Our [policies] are as effective as can possibly be in-person learning," said Ms. Hunnicutt. "...People think it's helping them, but really wearing a mask is helping others."

As the second-semester approaches, Freeman students will have to stay cautious and work together in order to prevent the spread. "Your actions have an exponential effect," said Mr. Mar-



Students practice COVID-safe guidelines.

shall. "Talk to your friends as well [about sticking to protocols]. That should happen not because of me, but because... you all are way more likely to listen to each other than you are to [administrators]."

'We the People' of Freeman Declare...

Audrey Jones
Staff Writer

Each year, seniors taking Advanced Placement (AP) Government at Freeman participate in the We the People (WTP) competition, and this year is no different. After months of preparation, the AP Government students dressed up in their best business attire and competed in the in-house competition on December 9, 2021, and the regional competition on December 17, 2021 at Freeman.

We the People is a "competition that simulates a congressional hearing where students become experts in one topic of American government," said Rob Peck, director of the Center for Leadership, Government, and Global Economics at Freeman. "They sit in front of a panel of judges who ask them questions about their area of research." According to Mr. Peck, judges are asked to consider student understanding and knowledge of their topics and how quick on their feet they are in their ability to answer questions related to their subject area.

At Freeman, each AP Government class competes together as a team. Each class is broken up into six groups, one to represent each of the six units. On the day of the competition, each group delivers

their opening statement for their question and then answers follow-up questions from the judges.

While the task may seem small, it takes huge amounts of time and effort to be prepared. "It's a lot of research of basically knowing everything that falls under the question that you're being asked," said AK Canavos, a senior AP Government student. "It's kind of like doing 30 minutes of research every night or reading a different 'Federalist Paper', amendment, or case law that corresponds with your question for a couple of months."

Johnny Metinko, a senior AP Government student, said, "Preparing for the competition can be really strenuous. It requires a lot of research about US History, as well as lots of practice for competition day with your team members."

Along with the hard work comes challenges. "I think the most challenging part is probably being able to talk in front of the judges because it's very in the moment," said Claire DeSouza, a senior AP Government student. "You have to remember all this stuff and once you read your statement, you have nothing else to help you answer the questions. You just have to use your brain and the data and statistics in cases that you've learned."

Between the lengthy and strenuous preparation time and public speaking challenges, it is not



Pictured: Gio Mazzeo, AK Canavos, Ethan St John

uncommon for students to feel nervous before competing. "It's definitely super nerve-wracking because you don't know the judges you are going to have, the type of questions they're going to ask, or if your statement is going to be up to par for them," said Claire.

However, many students feel a sense of pride for their hard work. "I think everyone's nervous, but also everyone's really

excited. I just remember when we were doing it everyone's really proud of seeing your classmates do so well," said AK.

"It was unique, stressful, intimidating, but also exciting, fulfilling, and rewarding," said Johnny.

This year, Freeman has two teams advancing to the state-level competition, who are projected to perform well. "I expect us to win everything," said Mr. Peck. "Both of the rotations that are going are extremely good. Both the talent level and the amount of work they're putting in is as high across the board as it's ever been for me."

"Both of the rotations that are going are extremely good ... the talent level and the amount of work they're putting in is as high across the board as it's ever been for me."

- Mr. Peck

One unit from an advancing team even scored a perfect score at the in-house competition. The unit consisted of students Sabrina Layton, Ethan St. John, Gio Mazzeo,

and AK Canavos. "It was insane because that was the first perfect score at the in-house, and when we had finished doing our round we were like 'that's the best we could have done'," said AK.

While winning is the goal for Freeman, it is still important to remember the other benefits of the WTP competition. "I think the benefit of We the People has so much more to do with participating than it does with winning. I'm so proud of how as a school we have embraced the competition and that everybody gets a chance to participate," said Mr. Peck.

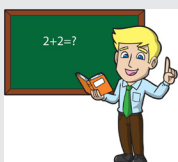
Overall, the experience of We the People is an important and valuable one. "I think WTP is so important because as seniors we're about to start voting and stuff," said AK. "I know so much more about my government system and the ways in which it works than I did three months ago."

At the State Championship competition on Feb 5, Freeman's Team Marshall finished second place to Maggie L. Walker Governor's School, and Freeman's team Brennan finished in third place. Freeman's Team Marshall will move on to represent Freeman at the We The People National Finals the weekend of April 22 on a wild card bid.



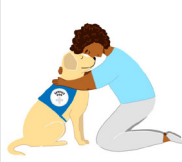
Team Marshall with their second place awards.

DSF's Most Interesting Teacher



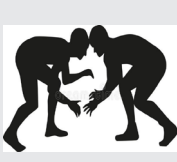
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Freeman's New Therapy Dog



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Wrestler Brady Burnham



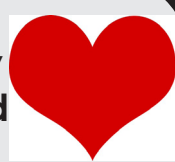
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Should Teachers be Paid More?



Taylor Widdifield
Arts & Entertainment Editor

In the past few years, the topic of teachers' salaries has become a hot button issue, sparking a rise in unions, strikes, and public discourse. Despite these developments, however, there hasn't been much change in the salary of teachers. While many people would note that teachers' salaries have risen in recent years, many don't take into account inflation. In fact, a report conducted on the National Education Association reveals that inflation-adjusted pay for educators has actually decreased as much as 15% between 2000 and 2017. These numbers are both disheartening and shocking, but it does beg the question: do people want teachers to be paid more if their salaries have actually decreased?

When it comes to the opinion of Americans on the issue, they tend to be in favor of raising teacher salaries. According to a 2019 poll conducted by Education Next, three in four Americans believe that teachers should be paid more. When it comes to the Freeman population, the same sentiment is shared. On our Instagram page (@dsf_commentator), we asked whether or not educators should be paid more. Out of the 192 people

who responded to the poll, 88.4% were in favor of increasing teacher salaries. So if polls clarify that a majority of people support increasing teachers' salaries, then why hasn't the change been made?

Despite teachers' fundamental role in our society, their importance isn't reflected in the respect they receive, both by the students they teach and the adult population. When people think about vital occupations, they tend to consider doctors, police officers, and even politicians, while teachers remain overlooked. Even so, there is one fact that remains: teachers set the foundation for future generations. Every doctor, police officer, and politician was able to obtain their job through their foundational understanding of society instilled in them by their teachers. Every job requires a baseline and some a higher level of education; if teachers are so significant that every other job relies on their existence, then their salary should certainly match that importance.

One of the ways to make a change for teachers here in Virginia is to advocate for an increase in their pay. According to data from the Department of Education's National Center for Education statistics, the average public school teacher's salary was \$63,645, which is drastically different from Virginia's average pay. Virginia ranks 50th in the country on teacher pay, according to a report from business.org, making only an average of \$53,000. Henrico County doesn't report a significantly better number, as according to Glass Door, teachers make an average of \$52,302 in Henrico County. All of this data has led me, and hopefully you, to one conclusion: when it comes to teachers' salaries, we have to make a change.

PHOTO: NEW YORK MAGAZINE



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Letters to the editor are encouraged. They must be signed before they can be printed. Because of variety and space, only a limited number of letters can be published. The Commentator reserves the right not to print a letter.

She Said



Cindy Xie
Opinions Editor

She Said



Isabelle Hevron
Opinions Editor



Valentines Day

Flowers and a nice handwritten card

Best gift?

I'll be happy with a Starbucks giftcard

Milk Chocolate

Favorite type of chocolate?

White chocolate

Fancy dinner and then chill at home

Ideal date?

Going to Carytown for some food and dessert

Valentine's! Love my girls though :)

Galentine's or Valentine's?

Galentine's!

"If I ain't got you"
- Alicia Keys

Best singing valentine song?

None, please do not buy me a singing valentine.

Chick-Fil-A heart tray for sure

Sushi or Chick-Fil-A heart tray?

Same here!

Make HCPS Sustainable



Kristina Kang
Design Editor

The climate crisis impacts and will continue to impact everyone. Institutions, organizations, and individuals must take action now to ensure a sustainable future for generations to come. Henrico County Public Schools is not an exception. While Henrico County has begun to look into more sustainable options with their Environmental and Sustainability Management System, there are always more solutions. Trash cans are still overflowing with unsorted waste, and diesel-powered buses continue to fill the air with pollution. As the effects of climate change become more and more prevalent, it is important that society, and our school district, begins to shift to sustainable alternatives.

Electric school buses may be part of a solution. In August 2021, former Governor Northam announced that 83 diesel buses in

school districts in Virginia will be replaced with electric and propane powered buses. As a result of these changes, it is predicated that carbon dioxide emissions will be reduced by 10,000 tons per year and one million gallons of diesel fuel will be saved. This would produce the same results as removing about 2,000 cars from the road. There is still funding left to distribute, so with the next round of applications, hopefully Henrico will be chosen to receive new buses.

The Department of Environmental Quality Director David Paylor said, "Virginia's investments in electrifying the school bus fleets is an important and critical part of our comprehensive approach to reducing pollution." It's exciting to see Virginia moving to sustainable solutions for schools, but more can and should be done.

Another possible solution is better waste management. According to a World Wildlife Fund 2019 report, food waste across the United States totals to 530,000 tons per year. Instead of sending all our waste to a general trash—which would all then be sent to landfills generating tons and tons of waste—adding a compost bin could be a better alternative. Estimates have found that composting could reduce trash sent to landfills by at least 30 percent in the United States. There are also many ways to compost making it a possibly realistic solution, such as composting with worms, schoolyard composting, large scale collection of compost, and even integrating

compost programs into recycling programs. The compost that is created could then be used for our campus grounds and gardens.

Adding more usable outdoor spaces is another way to be a greener school. This could be putting more benches outside for classes and individuals to use, adding new garden beds, or supporting the Freeman Project in their outdoor classroom initiative. This would not only help make Freeman greener, but could also improve the mental wellbeing of the students.

Outside of making large institutional changes, there are also smaller ways that people can practice sustainable habits. Choosing to bring a reusable water bottle (or even reusing a plastic water bottle) and utilizing the recycling bins in classrooms are simple and achievable changes that people can make.

While these are all possible steps to reduce waste and emissions, we must also continue to create opportunities for open dialogue on issues surrounding our environment. We should encourage discussions on crucial topics as simple as ways to live a more sustainable lifestyle and examine federal and state environmental policies to ensure our government pays enough attention to the climate change issues at hand.

As collective members of a society, we should all strive to practice sustainability in our ever-changing world. Through these combined efforts, schools can shift from waste-producing institutions to sustainable environments that can support generations to come.



PHOTO: NBC 12

\$10.5 million in grants went to 19 school districts in Virginia. This money was used for purchasing electric and propane buses.

Two Hour Delays: Underrated?



Kieran Wall
Editor-in-Chief

“I’ve realized there’s a certain beauty to the two-hour delay”

- Kieran Wall

late, I would sigh and wonder why they didn’t just cancel the whole day or make us go in on time. It always seemed like a bit of a cop-out, a half-measure. It took me almost my entire K-12 career to respect two-hour delays for their many benefits.

For one, two-hour delays give the county and Mother Nature time to ensure the roads are fully clear and safe to drive on. While on the surface this may seem like a point against two-hour delays in the eyes of students, I would much rather have to go into school for a little while than get in an ice-induced car accident on Three Chopt. And, hey, all the people commenting “cancel school i slipped,” can rest easy, knowing the side-walks will be shoveled and salted.

Another advantage of the two-hour delay is that it eliminates one of the biggest problems with normally scheduled classes: sleep deprivation! The extra two hours give students plenty of time to sleep in and avoid being caught on @dsfs-lumped. I know personally that coming into class with two more hours of sleep makes the already shorter day go by much faster.

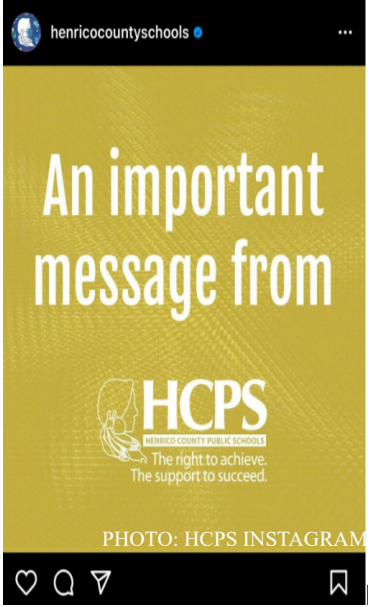
What I think is the biggest, often overlooked, gift of the two-hour delay is the impact it has on the school day as a whole. Think to yourself, have you ever actually done anything of serious consequence in class after a two-hour delay? Exactly. Because of the condensed schedule leading to less time in each block, most quizzes and tests get postponed. On a two-hour delay day, we are in the school building, but are we really in school? In addition, if a two-hour delay comes after a long string of full days off, it can provide a perfect transition day instead of being thrown head-first back into the grind of schoolwork.

I know nothing will ever replace the joy of learning school has been canceled due to snow. But, at the end of the day, a two-hour delay is better than nothing and actually has some unique benefits. So maybe next time @henricocountyschools announces that schools will open two hours late, the first reaction shouldn’t be to burn the comment section to the ground.

On a snowy day, there’s nothing I enjoy more than grabbing a blanket, making a warm cup of hot chocolate, and settling down to scroll through the comment section of the latest Henrico County Public Schools Instagram post. There are few things that bring me more joy than watching as the county is torn apart by a swarm of students who seem to forget (or not care) that they are posting on a public platform.

The kind of post that seems to evoke the most unbridled rage amongst the student body are two-hour delay announcements. We all know the scene. After a long day of watching the snow melt and stalking the overnight temperature forecast, the county decision finally comes out: two-hour delay. Now, a younger Kieran would have followed the torch and pitchfork mob to the comment section. However, as I’ve gotten older, I’ve realized there is a certain beauty to the two-hour delay.

To be very clear, before you stop reading out of anger, I’m not trying to argue that a two-hour delay is better than or equal to a cancellation. Like I said earlier, I was, until very recently, firmly opposed to the whole idea of two-hour delays. Whenever Andy Jenks would call and inform me that school was opening two hours



The Third Quarter: The Worst Time of the Year



Brooke Ward
Centerspread Editor

As winter break’s curtains close, children and teenagers of all ages are forced back into schools—the last place they want to be after experiencing a taste of freedom in their two weeks away from tests, teachers, and homework. Student drivers wake up on the first Monday back, ready to get to school on-time before the bell, but find their timeliness stifled by ice-covered windshields. They remain in their freezing cars, spending long minutes trying to warm up and anticipating their late arrival to first period while their lips chap and their skin dries out from the freezing temperature. These delayed drivers know that when they enter the school building, they’ll have to go to the attendance office for an unexcused tardy pass before entering first period, where they’ll be terribly ridiculed by their friends for being late. After making it to school, students will be greeted by coughs, sneezes, and wheezes, the blatant signs of traveling over the holidays.

Those who are fortunate enough to remain healthy but unfortunate enough to still be in school are soon terrorized by the end of the

second quarter. Students scramble to plunge through their dirty backpacks and crumpled papers looking for a missing assignment from two months prior ... got to get that zero out of the gradebook! The knowledge that the next quarter is drawing near doesn’t help the stress accompanying the end of quarter two. The worst of all marking periods approaches: the one with all the AP exam prep. The one with no holiday breaks. The longest one. The third quarter.

In the third quarter, AP students lose all aspects of themselves. They’re engulfed in the ambition to get a high score on their AP exams. Having spent one hundred dollars purchasing each exam, how could one not spend every waking moment studying to make the expenditures worth it? Some students don’t even understand why they’re preparing so adamantly for a “stupid exam,” but are so captivated by the possibility of college credit that attempting a top score seems like a must!

While in class preparing for AP exams, the coughs and sneezes brought to the table from sickly winter vacationers begin to infect the last remaining healthy students. In silent classrooms school-wide, students try to suppress their loud, ailing coughs. If they are to show their winter cold symptoms, their peers may accuse them of spreading COVID-19, a dangerous and dishonest act that they will avoid at all costs. So, students wipe their runny noses on their sleeves, pull their masks back up, and ignore their nice sleeves

that have become soggy napkins.

As if this time of year couldn’t get any worse, a multiplicity of students routinely misplace their winter coats. It happens every year—the items students bring to keep them insulated from the dreary weather somehow always manage to disappear. Jackets are always too warm for the school’s heated classrooms, but once winter coats are taken off, they’re forgotten. This time of year, concerned students can always be found in Freeman’s halls running to every classroom they visited that day in hopes of finding their nice puffer jacket before the long walk to the student parking lot.

During that freezing trek to the parking lot, it’s hard not to notice the disturbingly dark setting. Daylight savings, the man-made “holiday” that makes it dark at 5 pm, has passed. Seasonal depression kicks in as summer sunglasses are put away and the sun goes down before teenagers have even gotten home from school.

Considering the mess caused by this detestable time of year, students can’t be blamed for cuddling up with their pets, wearing warm pajamas, and dreaming about summer after bleak mid-winter’s exhausting school days.



Spotify Scandal



Annabelle Glassman
Editor-in-Chief

About three weeks ago, singer Neil Young announced that he would remove his music from Spotify after Spotify decided not to remove episodes of the Joe Rogan Experience podcast regarding COVID-19 vaccine misinformation. A few days later, Joni Mitchell followed suit. In response, Spotify has said that they will add a message on all COVID-19 related information that is put on the platform. However, at this point, it doesn’t seem like this addition will be enough to get either musician back on the platform, and other, smaller, musicians are following suit.

Admittedly, these removals kind of wrecked my go-to playlist. The hours of Mitchell’s music that are on my playlist have entirely disappeared. Six hours

that contain some of my favorite songs of all time are just gone. As she sings in “Big Yellow Taxi”, “Don’t it always seem to go, that you don’t know what you’ve got ‘til it’s gone?” While this is a bummer for me, I think this choice is impressive. I’m pretty sure that Neil Young and Joni Mitchell realized it was impractical to expect Spotify to knock Joe Rogan in favor of them. Joe Rogan has millions more listeners than both artists combined, therefore earning Spotify a lot more money. They still chose to sacrifice the money they make off of the platform, making a sacrifice for what they thought was right—fighting against vaccine misinformation. Now, onto the Joe Rogan issue. I think it is the responsibility of Spotify to really consider whether or not it is worth the increase in revenue to keep the Joe Rogan Experience on their platform. Sure, it is not Spotify’s fault that this is what Joe Rogan chooses to say on his podcast, and it definitely is not Spotify’s fault that people keep listening to and trusting the information. However, if such risks exist, it might be in the best interest of the platform and its users to take this off. Further, it may be in the best interest of a wider community of people. In the age of large media platforms like this, misinformation seems to be just about as contagious as the actual virus causing the pandemic.

AP Tier List

Ranked by difficulty from Opinion Editor Cindy Xie

S	AP Physics	AP Chemistry	
A	AP Calc BC		
B	AP Biology	AP Calc AB	AP Spanish Lang & Culture
C	AP English Lit	APUSH	AP Stats
D	AP Environmental Science	AP Gov	AP Euro
E	AP Art History	AP Macro	AP Micro
F	AP Human Geo	AP Psych	AP Latin

New Teacher Brings Life to Physics

Ada Malpani
Staff Writer

What is the stupidest thing you've ever done? For Jim Lehman, Freeman's new physics teacher, "Falling asleep while riding my motorcycle ... was probably the stupidest thing I've ever done." Rest assured, he does not condone driving while drowsy.

However, Mr. Lehman's credentials extend past unconscious motorcycle maneuvering. In 2000, Mr. Lehman received the REB Award (a local organization that rewards teachers who have been nominated for the award and then selected) and used the funds to travel to Nepal and Mount Everest's Base Camp, climbing a total of 20,000 feet. This year, upon noticing a vacancy in the physics department, Mr. Lehman joined the Freeman staff, teaching Honors and AP Physics.

Mr. Lehman's initial interest in physics came from his father who also taught the subject. "I taught it probably because my dad was a college physics professor," said Mr. Lehman. "I took physics in college pretty much because my dad made me like it. I mean, I really enjoyed it." Since college, Mr. Lehman has taught at a few schools, most recently Liberty Middle School for seven years and then Godwin High School for 12 years. At Godwin, he taught in the Todd Allen Phillips Center for Medical Sciences, formerly known as the Science, Mathematics, and Technology Specialty Center. After teaching at Godwin, he retired for three years. During this time, "I did a lot of home renovation projects, and also designed and



PHOTO: CLAIRE MORRIS

Mr. Lehman posing with his flying pig.

manufactured products using my 3D printer," said Mr. Lehman.

While retired, Mr. Lehman volunteered with Mennonite Disaster Service, an organization that assists in disaster relief. There, he served "as a cook for crews rebuilding homes after fires, floods, tornadoes, and other disasters." In the classroom, Mr. Lehman uses real world examples and connects physics with his own life. "[H]e does a good job of showing us how physics applies to the real world," said junior Ellie Roberts. "He wrote us a question on our tests that was about bobsledding, and then he showed us a video of it actually happening and [used] the numbers from a real situation."

Mr. Lehman also has firsthand experience in the role physics can

play in his own life. When he was in second grade, he noticed how an interesting physics concept could be used to torment some college students, and told this story to his students to help them better understand. "There's a thing they're working with now called the normal force," said Mr. Lehman. "Like, when [I] stand ... I'm pushing against the floor [and] floor is pushing back at me. [But] if it doesn't push back, I mean, what happens? I will go through it."

On a snowy winter's day when there was "a ton of snow ... [that] melted and froze [to form] a thick crust ... us little kids built tunnels underneath [and snow] and stocked up with snowballs," said Mr. Lehman. Then, when the college students walked by, a 7 year old

Mr. Lehman and his friends would start "bombing them with [snowballs] and then they [the college students] would come chase us." The little kids would hide back in their tunnels, because "[the snow] gave enough normal force back" but then, when the "heavy pounder [college] guys got on [the snow], they just went right through and fell three feet down to the ground."

Using real world examples to help teach physics makes the class "really interactive," said Ellie. "[The class is] not just him lecturing at us. He kind of wants us to do things and figure stuff out for ourselves."

Another aspect of teaching physics that Mr. Lehman utilizes is labs. Students have done a few competitive labs, like build-

ing paper towers. "I think competition labs are fun. We're going to do some cool ones," said Mr. Lehman. One of these cool labs is "making pigs fly," said Mr. Lehman, who proceeded to display a slightly terrifying plastic pig with loud flapping paper wings.

Mr. Lehman is also "very adamant that if you need to ask questions to come in during Freeman Focus or the morning," said senior Aubrey Walker. "He takes the job very seriously and makes sure to prioritize the student."

Coming from Godwin, Mr. Lehman said that he obviously had some expectations for his school's "enemy," but is happy to say that he has not found a single "enemy among the awesome students I work with every day!"

Winging It: The Secret Life of Freeman's Most Interesting Man

Peter Kriebel
Staff Writer

What motivates people? Is it money? Success? Fame? In the case of Freeman's own Drew Lovering, it's chicken wings. Mr. Lovering likes wings so much, in fact, that in 2007 he camped out in front of a Virginia Beach Buffalo Wild Wings with the hope of waking up to a year's supply of them.

Having said "Virginia Beach," someone hearing his story may picture a warm, summer, oceanside slumber party. However, the competition, which offered six wings once a week for a year to the first 30 people in line, took place in March. That meant the

weather was hovering around 40 degrees. Camping out wasn't all bad for Mr. Lovering as he was accompanied by five of his friends who he said, "played card games and did whatever we could to stay awake until 10 a.m. the next morning." To some, wings seem irritatingly inefficient. Gnawing at a sticky, roughly 3.5 ounce morsel of meat - more than half of said weight provided by bone - can be maddening. But to people like Mr. Lovering, this painstaking process doesn't deter him at all. In fact, when describing his perfect wing, he says it "has to be bone-in."

The human attention span is transient. Which is why most of the people who started this article are no longer with us. Seriously, what are you doing? There are real journalists who deserve your atten-

tion. But as I was saying, our vested interest in any one thing only lasts so long. For this reason, one may think that eating wings once a week for an extended period of time could lead to, at the very least, a mild aversion to them. That being said, yet again Drew Lovering diverges from the masses. It seems an excess of wings only fanned the flames of his love affair with them. "Wings," he said, "are one of my favorite foods. Therefore I could never be sick of them."

While I could write an entire story about the psyche of the Wing Warrior, as they call him - "they" being me, and never to his face - the fascinating life of Drew Lovering has more to offer than just battered, deep-fried poultry. Yes, this is only the tip of the iceberg. In the fall of 2013, Freeman's most

interesting man was knighted at a Renaissance fair in Rhode Island. FOR AXE THROWING! Now you're probably asking: Just how many lives has this one man been able to squeeze into his own? Mr. Lovering is like oxygen; he's everywhere yet nowhere at the same time. Scientists have tried to understand him but leave each time knowing less than they did before. As a matter of fact, he's more powerful than oxygen because oxygen is notoriously bad in high pressure situations. Drew Lovering, on the other hand, excels in

these moments. "I was knighted in front of about 100 people for sticking five axes in a row into a target about 15 feet away," says Mr. Lovering. This moment of Norse-like precision and power is described by Mr. Lovering as what "may be the highlight of my throwing-sharp-things career."

In an effort to throw us off his trail, the most interesting man at Freeman did "normal" things such as attending college and getting a dog. But we know the truth. And the truth will come out. Mr. Lovering is anything but normal.



PHOTO: EMILY WATERS

A collage of Mr. Lovering

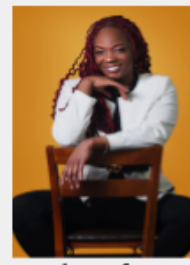
Who Am I?!

- He teaches at Freeman
- He went to the University of Southern California
- His favorite city is Tokyo
- He was an English Literature major in college
- He is equally obsessed with 80s low budget horror movies and Japanese cinema
- He worked in the writer's room of *Black Swan*

Local Black-Owned Businesses

Adiva Naturals (1802 E. Franklin Street)

- Nadira Chase- founder, CEO, product developer
- struggle with psoriasis began at age 11
- decided to study natural remedies to treat psoriasis and help hair growth
- products for multicultural skin types and hair of various curl patterns without toxic or harmful chemicals



Others to Check Out!

- BareSOUL Yoga
- Cheddar Jackson
- Hour Cycle Studio
- Maple Bourbon
- Moizelle's Cleaners & Launderer
- Rotate
- Sassy Jones Boutique



BareSOUL Yoga Founder, Ashley Williams

Hippodrome Theater (528 N 2nd St)

- Owned by Ronald Stallings
- Located in Jackson Ward, a recognized National Historical Landmark in the city of Richmond
- Built in 1914 as a vaudeville and movie theater
- Became a celebrated musical locale attracting such legendary greats as Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong
- Hosted DSF Prom in 2020



Moizelle's Cleaners Owner, Robert Charles, Sr.



Sassy Jones Boutique Founder, Charis Jones

Supporting Black-owned Business: Nomad Deli Review

Annabelle Glassman
Editor-in-Chief

Last year, while working to complete the Henrico County Black Student Union's Black History Month Bingo board, I first tried Nomad Deli. Within the line of Black history related experiences was this Black-owned restaurant that piqued my interest. Located in the Northside area of Richmond, Nomad Deli serves sandwiches and other deli-like foods.

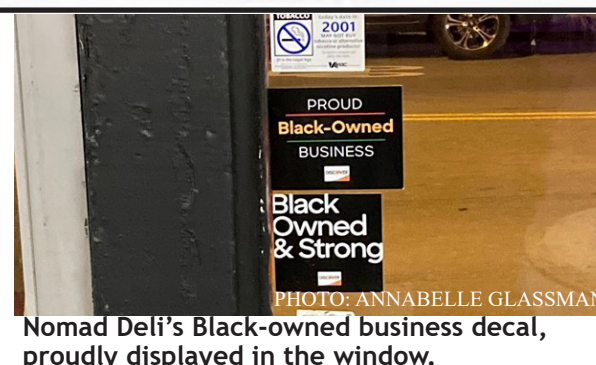
Oh, and they serve breakfast all day. Which, for a breakfast fan like me, is a really big deal. I stopped by Nomad again for dinner recently, at the beginning of February, and found it to be just as good as it was last year. For students who live in the Freeman area, it is not necessarily in the most convenient location. Their only location is about twenty minutes away from Freeman itself. Once I made it there, I chose a fried shrimp po' boy from the blackboard

listing a plethora of subs and hot sandwiches. I also got an order of the chicken and waffles for my sister, who is a big chicken and waffles fan. The process was efficient and it did not take too long for us to get our food. While the option to dine in the restaurant is available, we chose to order it to go. They also offer delivery. Overall, both of us were big fans of what we ordered. My po' boy was a great size that left plenty of the sandwich for leftovers that I could

save for the next day. My sister's chicken and waffles were the perfect serving size. The food itself was really good too. The sauces on the sandwich complimented the vinegary slaw quite well. The proportions of all toppings were also appropriate, something that in my opinion, is crucial to the integrity of any good sandwich. During Black History Month, it is important not only to remember contributions of Black people from the past, but also those of the present.

“Restaurants like Nomad Deli form a critical part of the greater Richmond community.”
- A. Glassman

A great way to do this is to give extra support to local Black-owned businesses. Restaurants like Nomad Deli form a critical part of the greater Richmond community.



Nomad Deli's Black-owned business decal, proudly displayed in the window.



Shrimp Po'boy, Chicken and Waffles, and fries from Nomad Deli.



Nomad Deli window art.

The Vision of the Black Student Union

Henry Haggard & Lily Bowman
Staff Writers

As Freeman's Black Student Union (BSU) enters its third year as an organization, the current members consider the organization's past as a way to plan for the future.

Although the idea for a schoolwide organization for Black students had been brewing for a long time, the group was initially established in the spring of 2019 with aid from Laurie Kaplan, a Freeman librarian. Following the break due to

the COVID pandemic, Ms. Kaplan created a presentation explaining the history of the Black people that surround the Freeman area. This presentation helps visualize the importance of creating a safe space for Black students as well as recognizing the importance of Black individuals in our community. William Leroy Vandervall played an instrumental role in getting county approval to establish two schools: Ziontown School and Quiccasin School. In his honor and under segregation, a separate school for Black children

was built on Pemberton Road in 1954 called William Leroy Vandervall Elementary. When schools were told to integrate in 1968, the school closed down; however, it was reopened in 1971 renamed Pemberton Elementary. Though this is just one example of the complex organizational structure of the integration period, it demonstrates the ways in which Black people have always fought for social justice and social change. The students of the Black Student Union continue to strive for ways to integrate Free-

man's Advanced Placement (AP) classes, educate their peers on Black history, and create a space where all students have equal opportunity to live, learn, and grow together. Junior Rachel Stanton, current president of the BSU, is one of these driven and dedicated students. "I joined [the BSU] because I knew that the classes that I would be taking would lack diversity," said Rachel. "I felt like [the BSU] was a place where I could not only be myself but a place where I could go specifically to find community."

"Since I've known Freeman as a student and then as a teacher, it's become a lot more diverse," said Ms. Kaplan. Despite this trend, she said, "Some people could go all day without having one student of color in their classes." One goal of the BSU is ensuring that "students [are] able to see that every class at Freeman is a possibility for them to take," Rachel said. This means "working on inclusivity in AP courses and seeing that these courses are available to students so that students [...] take these high-level courses

Library Books of the Month



What Black History Month Means to Me



Rachel Stanton
BSU President

Black History Month is a time of celebration and education for many Black people across America. It is a time when we can choose and have control over what we focus on. In our history classes, no matter how much of an ally the teacher is, there is a narrative that is centered around white Americans. We tend to lack representation of the achievements and importance of Black Americans to our history as a nation. This month, originally started by Carter G. Woodson as "Negro History Week", has become a time for Black Americans to focus on themselves. So often, our history and our actions have had to focus on how we benefit or affect white Americans. This is our third year celebrating Black History Month at Freeman and each year we have focused on celebrating Black culture,

achievements, and people in general and have seen nothing but amazing results. As a Black woman in a predominantly white school and community, I often find myself being the educator of my white peers, explaining my hair, the way I speak, or even the actions of another person in efforts to combat any preconceived notions they may have. As Black people, we are in a constant state of fighting racism. You will find that the content you see about Black History Month, especially at Freeman this year, will do nothing to educate white people about anti-racism, but will do everything to highlight the experiences, viewpoints, achievements, hopes, and joys of Black students. It is so important that we are able to take some time and focus on our own joy! This month is so important to me for that very reason. Every year, I get more excited to highlight the amazing accomplishments of people who faced nothing but hardship. We hope to continue celebrating Black History Month at Freeman and that our Black students find moments of joy in their history and our white peers see the importance of this joy!

DSF's Black History Month

- 02/2- Kickoff Man on the Street Interview
- 02/9-Brown Table Talk
- 02/16-Open Mic Night
- 02/23-Fashion Show

More Info

Livestreaming during Freeman Focus on Wednesdays all month

Let's Celebrate Together

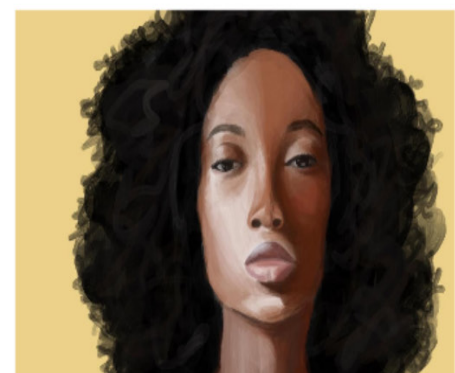


PHOTO: FREEMAN BSU

Black History Now

Group Art Exhibit

- o The Well Art Gallery
- o 1309 Hull St
- o Jan 30- Mar 4



Virginia Museum of

Fine Arts

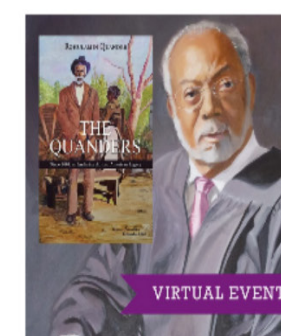
- o 200 N Arthur Ashe Blvd
- o *3 in 30: African American Artists of the Modern and Contemporary Art Collection*
- o Starts Feb 1



A Conversation with

Rohulamin Quander

- o Library of Virginia
- o 800 E Broad St
- o Feb 17



Freeman Students Help the Tuckahoe Volunteer Rescue Squad

Lillie Deaton Connor
Staff Writer

The Tuckahoe Volunteer Rescue Squad located off Horsepen Road is home to two Freeman students: junior Ishita Bakshi and senior Evan Reynolds. Both students are attendants at the Tuckahoe Volunteer Rescue Squad, a helping hand to the Attendant in Charge (AIC).

The Volunteer Rescue Squad consists of different positions. The ambulance driver drives the ambulance, but the AIC primarily communicates with the patient and makes all of the major decisions on how to treat the patients. Attendants assist the AIC, helping the process by taking vitals, starting IVs, and other tasks. “Essentially, I’m like another pair of hands to help,” said Ishita.

Evan is familiar with this line of work, as his father volunteered a year ago. That was not, however, the factor that made him join the Tuckahoe Rescue Squad. “I wrecked my car super bad, and I thought it was so cool the way all the EMTs and firefighters worked together,” said Evan. “I was like, I want to do this.”

Finding herself with a lot of free time during the pandemic, Ishita decided to take action. “I had a lot of free time, and wanted



PHOTO: CAROLINE SHANK

Vehicles of the Tuckahoe Volunteer Rescue Squad.

something to do with it,” Ishita said. Interested in being in the medical field in the future, Ishita was drawn to the opportunities the Tuckahoe Volunteer Rescue Squad held. “I knew that this had really good patient and clinical experience,” said Ishita.

To be on the Tuckahoe Volunteer Rescue Squad, you must be at least 16, take an educational class, and navigate the application and interview process. Once you have passed the class, a registry certification exam must be completed. Upon passing this exam, you then

have to apply to a specific station and complete a ridealong in which you are given peer reviews.

Evan’s favorite part of his position is the impact he creates for others and the diversity of the community. “I get to witness firsthand the impact that I can make on other

people’s lives,” said Evan. “It’s really cool being able to work with people from every background.”

Ishita loves being able to help people firsthand. “When there’s an emergency I get to go and be beneficial” said Ishita. She also enjoys being able to interact with a different part of the community she normally wouldn’t get the chance to interact with. “I get to see a lot of different parts of the Tuckahoe community. What I see volunteering as an EMT is a lot different than the demographics and the types of people I interact with at school,” said Ishita.

According to Ishita, one of the benefits of the job is forming new, close relationships with others. “You get really close to your crew. Sometimes we’ll do activities and hang out outside of work,” said Ishita.

Evan emphasized that being an EMT is not for everyone. “My advice would be to do a little bit of research and go on a ride along. I knew from the first time I did a ride along that this was something I wanted to do.”

“If you are interested in it and are willing to put in some time and energy, then it’s a great experience. That’s all that it requires,” said Ishita. “I think the most important thing is to be enthusiastic about learning new things.”

Freeman’s New Therapy Dog



PHOTO: RUSSELL NYSTROM

Henna and Mr. Orr receive a visit from Mr. Byrne

Jazmyn Howell
Staff Writer

Business teacher Mr. Orr and his therapy dog Henna are making a lasting impact on Freeman students after only a few visits.

Henna is a certified therapy dog, but it didn’t start out that way. “Henna is a former service dog that we were raising for an organization,” said Mr. Orr. “If everything [had] worked out right, she would have been with us for 18 months.” Mr. and Mrs. Orr are both volunteers for Canine Companions for Independence (CCFI). CCFI is a non-profit organization that provides trained dogs to people with disabilities for free. Mr. Orr and his wife are volunteer puppy raisers that take in puppies during their service dog training.

Mr. Orr and Mrs. Orr raised a puppy named Tron before Henna. They sent him to dog college in Medford, Long Island. Tron is now assisting a veteran with PTSD. Henna, however, turned out to be a different case. “At about six months, we noticed that she had some problem like a huffing sound coming out of her throat,” said Mr. Orr. They later found out that Henna’s larynx was developed improperly, and because of this defect, Henna was no longer eligible

to continue the CCFI program. After her diagnosis, Henna needed a home. “We were raising her anyway,” said Mr. Orr. “So for us, it was no different, but legally she was our dog.” If Henna had been able to follow the program, she would have stayed with the Orrs for only 18 months, but instead, they got to keep Henna forever.

After adopting Henna, the Orrs decided to get her certified as a therapy dog. To become a certified therapy dog, two types of tests must be passed. The first test is through the American Kennel Club. “They want to make sure that the dog is responsive to the handler and that she knows all the basic commands and she’s not aggressive,” said Mr. Orr. It is called the Canine Good Citizen Test, which Henna passed at the end of August.

Next, Henna had to pass another test from the Alliance for Therapy. To become officially certified, dogs have to pass three observational visits. “I would meet up with somebody that was actually scoring us,” said Mr. Orr. “She had to do everything perfectly.” After passing both tests Henna was a certified service dog and able to come to Freeman to visit students.

Since Henna could only visit once every two weeks with Mr. Orr, Ms. Meadows in School

Counseling also decided to get certified as Henna’s handler. “We are hoping to bring her for full school days and she can stay in my office to meet with students as needed,” said Ms. Meadows. It will take a minimum of six months for Ms. Meadows to become certified with Henna.

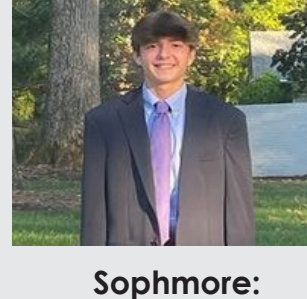
Henna has only visited Freeman students once, but she’s made quite the impression. “They create an inviting environment that helps people when they are stressed out,” said sophomore Tolly Hulcher.

Freeman used to have another therapy dog named Gus. After his handler, Mr. Inman, left Freeman, so did Gus. “I definitely think HCPS could benefit from more therapy dogs in schools,” said Ms. Meadows. “We are still in a pandemic and this has been the most stressful year in education I have ever experienced (and I have heard similar thoughts from both staff and students).”

This year we have witnessed changes physically and mentally among the student body, but according to Ms. Meadows, “therapy dogs offer a mental break, positivity, and joy to those who want to meet with them and we can all certainly benefit from some furry stress reduction,” and Henna’s visits will have a positive impact on Freeman’s students and staff.

Class Presidents’ Visions

Freshman:
Meade Anderson



“I am looking to help add to this year’s prom and help set it up. In addition, I hope to begin a fundraiser”

Sophomore:
Ellie Grace Robinson



“I aim to ensure the Class of ‘24 feels a part of the DSF family. I want the sophomores to make a positive impact on the school currently and moving forward.”

Junior:
Grayson Archibeque



“My goal this year is to lead the Class of 2023 to its best year yet! The class officers and myself are also planning prom, with hopes to making it the most memorable and enjoyable Freeman has seen, especially during this difficult times.”

Senior:
Riley Speidell



“I hope to have a smooth senior year and making some fun last memories.”

Senior Shares Her Tri-Citizen Story

Maggie Newton
Staff Writer

When Freeman Senior Sabrina Layton says she likes the Outback, she doesn’t mean the steakhouse. Virginia born, Sabrina holds citizenship in the United States, Colombia, and Australia. She received citizenship status through her parents: her dad is from Australia and her mom was born in Colombia.

“I was born in Richmond,” said Sabrina. “My oldest sister was born in Australia, and then my family moved to America and we have stayed in Virginia since.” Sabrina still has a lot of family in Australia. “All my cousins and aunts and uncles live there. So I only see them every five years. It’s really nice going there ... I like the cities [in Australia],” said Sabrina. “It’s just nice seeing everybody, and it’s a different

type of adventure to experience.”

When Sabrina travels to Australia, she stays in Melbourne with her extended family. They have, however, also traveled to other Australian cities. “About two hours outside of Melbourne is Geelong, where my cousins have a farm so we go see the property,” said Sabrina. She also often visits Sydney, where she has more family. “Not the last time we went but the time before, we went to Sydney. We did a three-day drive back so we could see extra things,” said Sabrina. “We’re trying to go this summer. Or next summer. Depends on if the borders [are open],” said Sabrina.

Growing up with an Australian parent means many aspects of Australian life have been passed on to Sabrina. Sabrina said she learned different words for objects than what her friends learned. One example was that she uses the word “indicator” instead of “turn signal.” Sydney Greiner, a senior, has

known Sabrina since their freshman year and can attest to the fact that Sabrina uses uncommon sayings. Sydney said she notices a difference in the words Sabrina uses compared to the words she uses. “I had never met anyone that had citizenship in more than just America,” said Sydney. “I think it’s really cool. I think it’s interesting.” Sydney thinks it is fun to hear about Sabrina’s view. “It’s definitely made me more interested in the countries,” said Sydney.

Even though Sabrina has never been to Colombia, it has still had a large cultural impact on her. “We listen to Colombian music and eat Colombian food,” said Sabrina. One example of a Colombian dish she eats at home is frijoles with rice.

“We celebrate Three Kings Day. It’s January 6 after Christmas. It’s specifically Latin American, and we have a cake with a baby in it,” said Sabrina. “If you find a baby, you win, and you get a



PHOTO: MAGGIE NEWTON

Pictured: Sabrina Layton

present.” Three Kings Day is a religious holiday that celebrates a biblical tale. It is also known as the Feast of the Epiphany.

Being well-versed in the Spanish language has also largely impacted Sabrina. “It’s helpful because you can talk to more people, like the English language learners here ... I’m not super fluent in Spanish, but I understand it a lot

easier than most people,” said Sabrina. “I’ve taken my grandparents to the doctor’s and translated.”

As a tri-citizen, Sabrina is able to take advantage of a variety of different cultural experiences. “It gives [her] a different perspective,” said Sydney. Wherever Sabrina ends up, there will always be new perspectives to gain and adventures to be found.

Moore Sports, Please!

Morgan Strudgeon
Staff Writer

For the Moore siblings, sports are a way of life. All three of them: Grace, PJ, and Seamus have been heavily involved in Freeman athletics since their freshman year of high school. Twins Grace and PJ Moore are both currently juniors, and even though Seamus graduated with the class of 2021 and is no longer attending school here, Freeman sports are still an integral part of all their lives. Grace said that her favorite part of being in such an athletic family is being able to compete with each other. She said, "It's really fun to be able to go watch my siblings or have them come watch me or play together sometime". PJ shared this sentiment when he said that having siblings that are also involved in sports "just makes it so much better and [we] are super competitive when it comes to everything." Since they all grew up playing basketball together, the sport is a big part of all their lives and is something that brings them closer together. "It's kind of the way that it's always been," said Seamus. "It just feels normal at this point." Grace has been playing sports almost her entire life. She started

playing both basketball and lacrosse when she was around six years old and both sports have stayed with her to this day. She said that she "started off [playing] basketball freshman year. But lacrosse was sort of what [she] was really looking forward to." However, since the spring 2020 season got canceled due to COVID, she was forced to wait another year. While waiting for her sophomore season of lacrosse to come around, Grace took the extra time to work on her skills with her coach. She said her coach "was really able to help [her] develop and become the athlete [she] wanted to be," she later said that this was what "eventually got [her] wanting to play college lacrosse." This led to her signing her National Letter of Intent to play college lacrosse at East Carolina University, an NCAA Division I school in the Appalachian Athletic Conference (AAC) located in North Carolina. For Grace, pursuing sports in college was "the natural next step". Later on, when the girls' varsity lacrosse team took to the field again this past year Grace said, "There were a lot of players that were grades ahead of me that I really looked up to growing up so it was super cool to be able to play with them for a year." While Grace has decided to

commit to playing lacrosse in college, for PJ, the year is split into two seasons, basketball and football. He has been playing both sports for "as long as [he] can remember," and started playing sports because of his dad, who also played basketball and football when he was in high school. Even though he has been playing both of these sports for as long as he can remember, he said that Freeman has "helped [him] grow a lot as an athlete, especially with the coaches that we have here," said PJ. "I have been through a lot of good coaching and it's really helped me develop [as a player] a lot." PJ thinks that the best part of sports is the teammates, he said that he "really likes the idea of a team and working together as a team." His basketball coach, Mr. George, who has been coaching him since he was about ten years old said that PJ has "an extremely high basketball IQ, tenacity, and an extraordinary will to win." Coach George went on to say that "It's almost hard to put into words what it's like coaching PJ" and that "it's very rewarding." "My favorite part of being a coach is seeing young men celebrate with each other on the floor and in the locker room after big wins," said Coach George. "As a



The Moore twins play basketball.

coach, [he] demands a lot, perhaps too much sometimes," from his players, but he said that "it's all necessary - the work is necessary so that these young men can be this happy with [their] success." Coach George also worked with Seamus, the oldest Moore sibling, who played football, basketball, and baseball as a Freeman athlete. Seamus said that he liked playing Freeman sports because the school "gave [him] a place

where [he] had great coaches and teammates around to help [him] succeed. The best part of it is the comradery and friendships it has brought throughout the years." Since his graduation in 2021, Seamus has been attending the University of South Carolina in Columbia SC. While his varsity athletic career has since ended, he said that he still plays sports all the time and participates in intramural sports on campus.

Brady Burnham Weighs in on his First Wrestling Season

Catherine White
Staff Writer

Brady Burnham is a freshman wrestler whose passion for the sport allows him to participate even when it might not be expected of him. Brady has Down syndrome but that does not keep him from being an active member of the Freeman wrestling team. "I saw the Tuckahoe [Middle School] wrestling team and that's what made me want to wrestle here," said Brady. Being a freshman, this is his first year on the team. He participates in team practices, weight room sessions, and travels to wrestling matches. Brady's first match was a junior varsity (JV) scrimmage at Cosby High School where he competed against a Cosby wrestler and they completed a full wrestling match. Coach Henshaw, Freeman's wrestling coach, said, "the young man from Crosby was awesome and a perfect partner in Brady's first ever match." As the season progresses Brady "continues to compete and improve," said Coach Henshaw. "I love watching Brady compete. Not just watching him wres-



PHOTO: MATTHEW HENSHAW

ing, but watching how encouraging the team is when he's on the mat," said Emma Jacoby, a senior wrestling manager. "When Brady wins, everyone gets so excited and makes Brady feel so special." Emma and Brady have formed a connection through spending time together in practice. She said, "Brady has inspired so many guys on the team and everyone

is always looking out for Brady both in school and at practice." Brady has also formed a relationship with Coach Henshaw through wrestling. Coach Henshaw has been the Freeman wrestling coach for seven seasons now. When Brady first came to him with the intention to join the team, Coach Henshaw said that it "would be great" and "He gets to live his

dream. His inclusion enriches our other wrestler's to be compassionate and understanding." The wrestler and coach have formed a relationship over this season. Brady said, "I have a good relationship with Coach Henshaw." A highlight of Brady's wrestling is his participation in the weight room. Emma said, "One of Brady's advantages is his

strength. He's a very strong kid and is always able to keep up with the moves, running, conditioning, and when we go to the weight room, he loves lifting weights with Coach Henshaw." Brady said, "I like taking people down. I like to win." This goes along with how Emma describes him as "hard-working." She also said, "he is kind-hearted and goofy." Brady's twin sister Anabelle Burnham described him similarly saying, "he has a big personality. He's very outgoing and is friendly to everyone." She said Brady "has been interested in wrestling for a while now." On Dec. 16, 2021, a news article was published on the WTVR CBS 6 website, featuring Brady and the Cosby wrestler he wrestled at his first match. Brady said, "It was cool to be in the news." The article features an interview with Coach Henshaw and Brady as well as some video clips from Freeman wrestling practice. Brady plans to continue wrestling his next three years at Freeman. "Having Brady on the team has enriched our lives and humbled us," said Coach Henshaw.



Men's Basketball Standings (updated 2-1-22)

17-5

14-7

12-9

11-10

9-11

11-10

11-9

15-6

9-11

13-7

10-11

8-13

10-12

16-5

18-3

Beijing? 2022 Winter Olympics

Jack Kelleher
News Editor

The Winter Olympics this year is going to suck, plain and simple. Let's start with some sports-related problems. Probably the most important of which is that there is pretty much no snow in Beijing. Almost all of the snow which will be used for the Winter Olympics, whether that be for snowboarding, skiing, or biathlon, will have to be artificial. The fact that the city which is hosting the "WINTER" Olympics has no snow seems to be a problem and



PHOTO: SCIENCE NEWS

A ski jumper competes in a preliminary competition to qualify for the Beijing Olympics.

is indicative of the general tone of this entire Olympics: dysfunction. As with everything that has happened in the past two years, COVID is hanging over this Olympics as a major issue. The possibility of an athlete or entire team being disqualified from competition because of a positive COVID test has the ability to ruin the whole event. This could be seen when the entire International Ice Hockey Federation's World Juniors tournament in 2022 had to be canceled due to the large amounts of teams that had to quarantine.

This threat is compounded by the fact that China has had to lock down a third city recently because of a COVID outbreak. Another major problem facing this Olympics is the lack of National Hockey League (NHL) players. At least in terms of TV ratings for NBC, men's hockey is one of the biggest draws, and not having the highest level of competition at the Olympics will result in less interest and less entertaining games. Some of the most legendary Olympic moments in recent history have come from

when NHL players played, like Sidney Crosby's Golden Goal in Vancouver 2010 or TJ Oshie and Team USA's shootout win against Russia in Sochi 2014. Especially right now, the way that national rosters would have shaken out, the United States and Canada would both be incredibly competitive, possibly leading to some of the best Olympic hockey we have ever seen. While it could be argued that this lack of attention on men's

hockey puts more of a spotlight on other events and sports, it also may just remove any incentive viewers had to watch the Olympics. The familiarity fans had with NHL players and thus Olympic hockey provided a gateway for them to get involved with other Olympic sports. Similarly and exacerbated by no NHL players, is the lack of marketable personalities. At least as of right now, there are few athletes to promote. Shaun White, while competing, is out of his prime, Lindsey Vonn is no longer competing, and no more Jamaican Bobsled team. The only person who comes to mind as memorable from a previous Olympics is Chloe Kim. Finally, the Winter Olympics is being held in China. Quite frankly, it is ridiculous that a country which is conducting an active genocide is able to host the Winter Olympics and it is even more ridiculous that the United States and other countries are participating. While the US and Canada have said that they will not send diplomatic delegations, they are still sending athletes, so this "protest" is nothing more than a useless gesture. Overall, this Winter Olympics is shaping up to be one of the worst in decades. Is it worth watching? Maybe, but unless something drastically changes, the interest level from Americans will remain low.



PHOTO: NBC
The official Beijing 2022 logo.

The End of an Era

Cameron Cavender
Sports Editor

After 22 seasons in the NFL, the great quarterback Tom Brady has announced his retirement, sending shockwaves throughout the sports world. Undoubtedly the greatest to ever play his position, and arguably one of the greatest athletes of all time, Brady has inspired generations through his play and his equally famous story.



PHOTO: CBS SPORTS

Tom Brady looks to throw a pass downfield.

In 2020, he had a change of scenery. Leaving his long-time team, the New England Patriots, for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Brady won a title in his first season ... ultimately his last championship.

His seven Super Bowl titles are more than any individual NFL team franchise, with the closest being the Patriots and Steelers with six each.

Brady will long be cemented in the NFL record books as well. Apart from his record number of titles, he holds records such as most career passing yards (84,520), passing touchdowns (624), passing attempts (11,317), and completions (7,263).

He's ready to move on to the next phase of his life, one without football. However, his next stop will undeniably be the NFL Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. He truly is one of the greats. Whether you like him or you don't, his great-

ness must be respected. Brady inspired not only the next generation of quarterbacks, but the generation that has grown up only knowing an NFL with Tom Brady.

It is also important to note the recent retirement of long-time Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger at the end of this past season. After 18 seasons, Roethlisberger retired with two Super Bowl championships, and is one of the greatest players in the storied Steelers franchise.

The retirement of these two decorated quarterbacks marks the end of an era. Almost all of the quarterbacks of our childhood have retired. Drew Brees, Peyton Manning, Eli Manning, Philip Rivers, and now Roethlisberger and Brady. A chapter in the NFL history books has closed. A new chapter, with many young, talented quarterbacks has begun. But will there ever be another Tom Brady?

2022 Basketball Season Update

Girls	Boys
@ Atlee W 36-28	vs. Clover Hill W 81-60
@ Prince George W 40-39	vs. Prince George W 76-58
@ Midlothian L 43-30	vs. Hopewell W 60-43
Vs. Glen Allen L 51-22	@ Midlothian W 52-30
Vs. Tucker W 58-19	vs. Glen Allen W 57-44
@ Henrico L 55-49	vs. Tucker W 70-30
vs. Goochland W 59-36	vs. Deep Run W 49-32
vs. Godwin L 33-31	@ Henrico L 48-47
@ Maggie Walker W 50-24	@ Church Hill Academy W 50-49
vs. Deep Run L 39-38	vs. Godwin W 48-30
@ John Marshall L 51-45	@ Great Bridge W 58-51
@ Saint Catherine's L 53-33	@ St. Christopher's W 60-48
@ Glen Allen L 70-23	@ Deep Run W 67-48
@ Goochland W 54-32	@ John Marshall L 70-58
@ Tucker W 47-17	@ Glen Allen W 61-49
7-9	vs. Thomas Jefferson W 62-41
	@ Tucker W
	vs. Hermitage W

DSF Ivy Commits

Brett Bishop (12)
Columbia University
Class of '26

PHOTO: BRETT BISHOP

Ava Jung (11)
Cornell University
Class of '27

PHOTO: AVA JUNG

"There were countless factors that went into my decision but it ultimately came down to academic opportunities... Being able to train in a place like NYC is a once in a lifetime opportunity and that's why I chose Columbia." - Brett Bishop

"I love the team, the coach, the campus, and all of that Cornell offers me in terms of my academic and athletic goals. I chose to commit to Cornell Women's Soccer because it was the right fit for me." - Ava Jung

“Spiderman: No Way Home” - Transformative or Mediocre?

Grayson Horner
Online Editor-in-Chief

Reviews for the new Spiderman movie were nothing short of fantastic, and fan reception was unrivaled. “Spiderman: No Way Home” even earned itself a 98% Audience Score on Rotten Tomatoes. But, did this movie live up to all of the hype? Yes and no.

Going into the theaters, I was expecting to be absolutely amazed. As someone who is generally skeptical about Marvel movies, the flood of positive reviews convinced me that this one would be different; in that respect, I was sadly disappointed.

The movie starts off by showing the audience how the main characters’ lives- and their college plans- have changed following the release of Spiderman’s true identity. This exposition transitioned to the main



PHOTO: DEADLINE

plot, which involved villains from previous Spiderman adaptations entering Tom Holland’s universe. All the previous Spiderman actors would soon join Tom Holland to fight back against the old villains.

The premise was certainly interesting, but the plot execution didn’t seem out of the ordinary or particularly unique. The old Spidermen, and villains, seemed like tools for fan service. Make no mis-

take, the fan service worked; the audience cheered each time a new Spiderman came on screen. But as someone who barely remembers the old Spiderman movies, and doesn’t regard them as fantastic cinema, I didn’t really care.

Moreover, this reduce, reuse, and recycle of heroes and villains culminated in a Marvel style final fight, without much spice or flavor. It felt like they just took

the old protagonists and threw them against the old antagonists.

Now, the movie itself wasn’t all bad. I’d say the graphics and mediocre plot still put it towards the top of the list of best superhero movies, and there was one element of the movie which was mostly foreign in previous Marvel movies that felt fantastically refreshing.

A common criticism I have for most Marvel films is that they often

refuse to take themselves seriously. The second the drama begins, or a serious topic is mentioned, the comic relief character has to crack a joke. The idea of killing off an important character felt like something Marvel wouldn’t delve into. In this movie, however, a very important character was killed, and the scene was very believable and emotional. Spiderman had a normal human reaction, without any comic relief or joke being made. It felt like the characters’ actions had consequences, which made the story feel real ... something that Marvel movies often fail to do.

All in all, if you enjoy movies from the Marvel Cinematic Universe, you’ll love “Spiderman: No Way Home,” even if you feel manipulated by fan service afterwards. If you don’t like Marvel movies, you’ll enjoy the good graphics and mediocre fight scenes, but you shouldn’t expect to dwell significantly on what you watched.

Review of “Riverdance: The Animated Adventure”



PHOTO: IRISH CENTRAL

Maddie Cassidy
Copy Editor

Netflix recently released an original film called “Riverdance: The Animated Adventure.” This animated fantasy movie is a delightful story of Irish culture and has a surprising amount of emotional lessons throughout its one hundred minutes. On “Rotten Tomatoes,” the movie only got a 60 percent for the Tomatometer score while receiving a 76 percent for an audience score. The main complaints relate to the level of imagination and absurdity that comes along with the movie’s plot. I disagree, and found the movie to be a delightful comedy that celebrated Irish dancing and taught valuable moral lessons.

The movie is set in a small town in Ireland around St. Patrick’s day where the townsfolk are eagerly preparing for a celebration. Keegan, a young Irish boy, is excited about the party and celebrating with his grandfather when his grandfather unexpectedly passes away. He is overcome with grief and turns to his Spanish friend Moya to teach him how to cope with his grief and celebrate his

granddad’s life. Moya leads him to the river where he discovers the truth in the legend of the Megaloceros Giganteus! These creatures show him how to Irish dance and spend time hurling (an Irish sport) before they become threatened by the Huntsman and their mythical ability to support the river is threatened. Will the Megaloceros Giganteus be able to regain their ability to control the river flow? Will Keegan be able to find the joy inside of himself to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day the way his grandfather would have wanted? You’ll have to watch the movie to find out!

As a former Irish dancer, I did not have high expectations for how this movie would turn out. There are many parts of Irish dancing that I feel often get lost in interpretation, like the key detail of straight arms glued to the dancers’ sides when performing, but were included in this movie! The film stayed true to Irish culture and was a brilliant representation of Irish dancing and the traditions behind it. Not only was Irish dancing used to represent Irish culture but hurling was the sport of choice for the characters. Hurling is a sport native to Ireland that is a mix between lacrosse, hockey, and base-

ball. The movie honors the traditions of Irish culture and the things that truly make this culture unique.

“Riverdance: The Animated Adventure” taught a valuable lesson about grief and the importance of community. The grandfather’s passing was sad at the beginning of the movie, but by the end you truly recognize that the best way to deal with grief is through the celebration of the deceased one’s life. Keegan didn’t just learn this lesson as an individual- the whole town and his animal friends supported him along the way.

The animation was absolutely fantastic and very visually appealing. I was not expecting Pierce Brosnan, a big name in the film industry, to voice the grandfather and be an integral part of this movie. Viewers may also recognize names such as Lilly Singh and Brendan Gleeson.

This description may not necessarily explain how the movie is truly lighthearted but I thoroughly enjoyed it. I am not going to tell you that as a high schooler you must watch this movie, but the next time you are babysitting or celebrating St. Patrick’s Day with your younger siblings, I suggest giving this movie a view.

The Weeknd’s “Dawn FM” Review



PHOTO: THE GUARDIAN

Isabelle Hevron
Opinions Editor

Five number one hits on worldwide music charts. Three Grammys. Headliner at the Super Bowl LV halftime show. Abel Tesfaye (also known as The Weeknd) is one of the biggest names in the music industry today. He recently released “Dawn FM,” an album filled with his typical synthetic, retro style songs. Personally, I like The Weeknd, and I had high expectations for this album after the success of his 2020 album “After Hours.”

The album cover for “Dawn FM,” an aged picture of Abel, immediately threw me off. “I already don’t like the album because of the cover,” commented senior Kaitlyn Plemmons. The cover portrays Abel as an old man, fitting with his album theme of being stuck in purgatory. While the theme had potential, I don’t think it was his best idea.

The second song on the album, “Gasoline,” was one of the weirdest combinations of noises I’ve ever heard. There’s some sort of autotuned voice in the background that sounds like it has a British accent. I know The Weeknd loves his futuristic beats, but this was straight out of a sci-fi movie. It was way over the top, and I couldn’t even attempt to listen to the lyrics. Unfortunately, this meant his album was off to a terrible start.

The next few songs all sounded the exact same. However, I did recognize “Sacrifice” from the radio. It’s better than the first few, but not by much. I will say that it is catchier than the others, and I could actually understand what he was saying this time. I was just about ready to give up listening to the album here, but I had to keep faith that Abel would pull it together.

I was excited to see (feat. Tyler, the Creator) next to “Here We Go...Again.” I love Tyler, so this was definitely a good sign. Even though he was just a feature in the song, I still liked his part in it; their voices go well together. I’m not sure why, but that song was a turning point in the album. I appreciate the second half much more. “Best Friends” is good, and so is “Is There Someone Else?” The beats felt much less forced, and it overall sounded more onbrand for Abel. Both songs reminded me of “After Hours.” I also enjoyed Lil Wayne’s feature on the album, as it was a much needed change of pace.

Even though “Dawn FM” is not my favorite, it was by no means terrible, and I enjoyed about half of the songs. I wished he would have switched up the base and beat of some of the songs, as it got pretty repetitive after a while, but his vocals and lyrics were good. As someone who was introduced to The Weeknd during his “Starboy” and “Beauty Behind the Madness” era, I know he is an extremely talented musician. I’m excited to see what other projects he’s going to release in the future.

Coming Attractions

The Lion King	Altria	Mar. 9-20
How I Met Your Father	Hulu	Feb. 22
Bridgerton Season 2	Netflix	Mar. 25

Art Department Supports the Afghan Refugee Drive

Farah Abdullah
Staff Writer

Inspired by the History and Human Rights Club's (HHRC) Afghan Refugee Drive, the art department has decided to sell ceramic pieces to raise money for Afghan Refugees in Virginia. Almost two years after schools closed down in 2020 and the art-making process put on hold, Freeman's art teachers were left with a graveyard of pandemic pieces that had been abandoned. Art and ceramics teacher Mrs. Elizabeth Jones noticed a large amount of leftover ceramic pieces from the past interrupted years. "If nobody comes and gets [their work], we have to throw it away," said Mrs. Jones. "It hurts us as teachers to see that happen." "As soon as [HHRC] came to us with the Afghan Refugee Drive," said Mrs. Jones. "[the art department] thought, 'oh, [there is] a perfect way to help support their cause!'" "[Before the 2021 Winter break], we had our booth open after school so that people could buy [the pieces] for gifts, if they wanted to, or just for themselves," said Mrs. Jones. "We didn't price it, we just said we're accepting donations [towards the Afghan Refugee Drive] and people were very generous." The donation of about \$300 was



PHOTO: ELIZABETH JONES

Some pieces made by the Art Department

raised in only three days of sales. "It was a pretty good turnout," said Mrs. Jones. Supporting the cause was an "an easy decision" to Mrs. Jones and the rest of the art department, especially because they "happen to have a number of Af-

ghan students in [their] classes, so it's even closer to [their] hearts." The Afghan Refugee Drive is a product drive for refugees in Virginia hosted by the HHRC. The project was put to work by the HHRC, along with the help of se-

nior Mads Kuriger, who connected the club with Team Rubicon, a disaster response organization. "Essentially, we were given an Amazon wish list [by Team Rubicon] for the Fort Pickett location (which is where refugees were arriving)," said Aubrey Walker, HHRC Vice President. "and from there we made posters with QR codes and put them around the school for students to scan." The art departments' part of the drive is over, but the Afghan Refugee Drive is still active. "We put up the posters about two weeks before winter break, and since the posters are still up, people can still donate!" said Aubrey. Although the drive was hosted by the History and Human Rights

Club, with students' efforts and distribution of posters, it quickly became a school-wide project. "It was basically [for] anyone who wanted to participate, so it didn't have to be club specific," said Aubrey. "Art club was one of the clubs I contacted about the drive, but from there, they pretty much sorted it out themselves." When students are unable to donate money, Mrs. Jones believes they can donate their abilities. "One of our major themes [in art classes and the National Art Honor Society] is that when you have a gift and ability that can better your community, that's what you should do with it," said Mrs. Jones.

"When you have a gift that can better your community, that's what you should do with it"
- Elizabeth Jones



Afghan Refugee Drive poster created by the History and Human Rights Club (HHRC)



A variety of Mochinut's unique donuts

Mochinut Review

Cindy Xie
Opinions Editor

December 1st, 2021 was the grand opening date of the new, long-awaited donut and corndog shop: Mochinut. Mochinut Richmond is located on the ground floor of the Chesterfield Apartment Building at 900 W. Franklin St, right on Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) campus. This year-old company offers three main items: mochi donuts, Korean corn dogs, and bubble tea. Even with these three limited options, there are a variety of flavors within each. After hearing about the excitement regarding Mochinut's opening, a fellow staff member of The Commentator, Kristina Kang, and I decided to go there and try it out ourselves. We went about a week after the place had opened, on December 10th, 2021. From the beginning, Kristina and I struggled to find Mochinut. We had walked around the block at least two times before finding it; it was hidden inside another building that looked like a residential building and the sign on the window was very small. After walking in, we noticed the line was decently long and found ourselves waiting for over 10 minutes before we could order. The inside of the building was cutely decorated and had a nice, modern aesthetic. K-pop music was playing and there was a wall of fake grass and flowers with a pink neon sign that people were taking pictures with (very Instagram worthy). I looked at the kinds of donuts on the menu and was hoping to have the ube or taro donuts. However, there were very few options of donuts actually available. The only flavors that were left were matcha, blueberry, cheesecake, and strawberry funnel. I was disappointed with this selection because I wanted to be able to try more unique flavors that I couldn't find elsewhere.

As for the corn dogs, I wanted the half and half, which was half of a fried corn dog with a hotdog and the other half filled with cheese. I was considering getting bubble tea as well, but the prices were too high. Both me and Kristina agreed that it would be better to get boba somewhere else, as it didn't seem reasonable to buy \$6 boba here. When it was finally my turn to order, the cashier told me that the only corn dogs they had left were the original ones. Once again, I was disappointed that I couldn't get what I wanted; yet, I wasn't fully surprised considering it was still very busy and they could be running low on supplies. The cashier was frantically running around not only taking people's orders but also having to pack the donuts and teach a new employee how to do so as well. Because Mochinut was short-staffed, it took quite a while for me and Kristina's orders to come out. While Kristina and I have never had Korean corn dogs or mochi donuts, our expectations for these delicious-looking treats were high. As we bit into our corn dogs, both of us were a little underwhelmed. They did not taste how we expected them to, they were not bad but they were also not amazing. In my opinion, the corn dogs were not crispy enough and had no special quality to them. However, one good thing about them was that they were large. The matcha donuts were decent as they had the perfect level of sweetness and a soft chewy inside. Overall, I would give Mochinut 3 and a half stars. While the staff was very friendly, the wait and service time was longer than it should have been. I was not pleased with the limited option selection and the expensive prices of bubble tea. The original corn dog was mediocre, but the matcha donut had a yummy taste. One aspect I think Mochinut does a good job of is promoting its appearance and appeal. Even though my expectations of Mochinut were not fulfilled, I hope to visit at least one more time and give it another try.

What Valentine's Day Candy Are You?

- What do you do with your free time?
A. Hang out with friends B. Volunteer C. Do something outdoors D. Read
- How would your friends describe you?
A. Outgoing B. Caring C. Chaotic D. Intelligent
- What TV show do you love to binge watch?
A. Outer Banks B. Gilmore Girls C. Criminal Minds D. Breaking Bad
- Which animal do you believe would be your spirit animal?
A. Monkey B. Koala C. Tiger D. Dolphin
- What's your favorite holiday food?
A. Ham B. Mashed Potatoes C. Burgers D. Chocolate
- Which of the following is on your bucket list?
A. Skydiving B. Make a Difference C. Climb Mount Everest D. Win a Nobel Prize

Check dsfcommentator.com for full quiz and results!

Love is in the Air

Across

- A sweet treat in a heart-shaped box
- He wrote her a love _____.
- _____ Valentine Grams—a musical Freeman tradition
- The candy hearts sold on Valentine's Day with messages written on them: _____ hearts (aka sweethearts)
- You might have a secret _____.

Down

- The shape of the holiday
- A good smelling gift for your girlfriend
- Valentine's day is on this date in February
- The color of this holiday
- Valentine's day is all about this feeling
- He'll get you with his arrow of love